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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure

by Geoffrey Van Orden, Colm Burke, Laima Liucija Andrikienė, Nickolay Mladenov, Nirj Deva, Bernd Posselt

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on Burma

European Parliament resolution on Burma

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolutions of 12 May 2005, 17 November 2005, 14 December 2006 and 21 June 2007 on Burma,
- having regard to the first formal session of the United Nations Security Council on Burma, held on 29 September 2006,
- having regard to the statement by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, of 25 May 2007, calling for 'restrictions on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political figures' to be lifted,
- having regard to the letter to the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, signed by 92 Burmese MPs-Elect, of 1 August 2007, which includes a proposal for National Reconciliation and democratization in Burma,
- having regard to the unprecedented denunciation by the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Jakob Kellenberger, of 28 June 2007, of violations of international humanitarian law committed against civilians and detainees by the Government of Burma, and his demand that the Government of Burma take urgent action to end these violations and prevent them from recurring,
- having regard to Commission Regulation (EC) No 481/2007, of 27 April 2007, renewing restrictive measures against Burma,
- having regard to the renewal of 1 August 2007 by the Government of the United States of America of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003,
- having regard to the public request of 23 August 2007 by the Head of ASEAN's Inter-Parliamentary Caucus, Zaid Ibrahim, that China use its influence to resolve the crisis in Burma,
- having regard to the eighth ASEM Foreign Ministers' meeting held in Germany on 28-29 May 2007,
- having regard to the letter of 15 May 2007 to General Than Shwe, signed by 59 former heads of State, calling for 'the immediate release of the world's only imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi',
- having regard to the 88 Generation Students' Announcement of 8 August 2007, for the 17th anniversary of the victory of the National League for Democracy (NLD) in the parliamentary elections of 27 May 1990, condemning the constitutional proposals being made by the National Convention, which entered its last phase on 18 July 2007,

– having regard to the earlier report (18 July 2007) by Human Rights Watch that the proposed new Constitution for Burma would maintain a repressive system of military rule,

– having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the NDL leader, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Sakharov Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, has spent 11 of the last 17 years under house arrest,

B. whereas on 14 August the Government of Burma withdrew fuel subsidies without warning, leading to an increase in fuel prices estimated at 500%,

C. whereas the Burmese Assistance Association for Political Prisoners estimate that a minimum of one hundred human rights activists and peaceful protesters were arrested in the immediate wake of protests at the fuel price increase of 14 August,

D. whereas the National Convention of Burma has now spent more than 14 years drafting a new Constitution, but lacks legitimacy and international credibility due to the absence of democratically elected representatives, most notably from the NLD,

E. whereas on 19 July 2007, Minister of Information Brigadier General Kyaw Hsan, announced that the proposed new Constitution of Burma would be complete within two months, but gave no timetable for implementing the steps acknowledged, even by the regime, as necessary for the transition to a democratic state,

F. whereas on 25 May 2007 the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) extended the illegal detention of Aung San Suu Kyi for another year,

G. whereas the SPDC continues to subject the people of Burma to appalling human rights abuses, such as forced labour, persecution of dissidents, conscription of child soldiers, and forced relocation,

H. whereas 30% of Burma's population, an estimated 15 million people, are subsisting below the poverty line,

I. whereas ASEAN has started to take a more robust stance against the abuses by the military regime in Burma and to insist that Burma improve its human rights record and embrace democracy,

J. whereas on 15 May 2007 Russia and Burma concluded an agreement to build a nuclear research reactor in Burma, despite international concerns about safety standards, security and dual use,

K. whereas, for the first time since 1988, Buddhist monks participated in demonstrations against the regime, in spite of the night-time curfew which had been imposed in Thanlyin since 19 August 2007,

1. Deplores the SPDC's crackdown on peaceful protestors demonstrating against the fuel price increase of 14 August 2007, involving the arrest of over 100 people and brutal,

violent attacks on civilians including women;

2. Demands the immediate and unconditional release of all those who have been arrested since the protests began on 19 August 2007, including the leaders of the "88 Generation Students" such as Min Ko Naing, who has already spent 16 years in prison, and Ko Ko Gyi, who has spent 15 years in prison;

3. Expresses deep concern at the military build-up in Rangoon and the violent attacks by security forces and proxy civilian organisations;

4. Strongly condemns the SPDC's use of civilian mobs such as the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) and the Swan Ahr Shin (SAS) to arrest, attack, intimidate and threaten protestors and activists, and calls for the immediate disbanding of these and similar groups;

5. Demands the immediate and unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi;

6. Condemns the SPDC's unrelenting oppression of the Burmese people and its persistent persecution and imprisonment of pro-democracy activists; draws particular attention to the case of U Win Tin, a 77-year old journalist detained as a political prisoner for almost two decades now for writing a letter to the UN on the ill-treatment of political prisoners and the poor conditions in which they are held;

7. Insists on the immediate release of U Win Tin, the twelve imprisoned Members of the Burmese Parliament and of all political prisoners – estimated to number over 1200 – held by the SPDC;

8. Deplores the fact that, despite the condition of the country, regional and international criticism and forty-five years of rule, the SPDC has failed to make any substantial progress towards democracy;

9. Urges cessation of the current illegitimate constitutional process, and its replacement by a fully representative National Convention including the NLD and other political parties and groups;

10. Applauds the unprecedented intervention by the Head of ASEAN's inter-parliamentary Caucus, urging China actively to engage in bringing about change for the better in Burma;

11. Reiterates its regret that the Burmese Foreign Minister, Nyan Win, banned from travelling to the EU, was permitted to attend the eighth ASEM Foreign Ministers' meeting in Germany this year, only days after the military junta in Burma had extended the illegal house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi for another year;

12. Insists that the IAEA subject any nuclear research reactor in Burma to comprehensive safeguards, in order to ensure that any civilian nuclear programmes are not diverted to military purposes, and calls on the Burmese regime to fulfil its obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty;

13. Insists that the night-time curfew on monks of Thanlyin, and other restrictions on the free

expression of opposition to the regime and its methods, be removed;

14. Urges China and India to use their considerable economic and political leverage with the Burmese regime in order to bring about substantial improvements in the country and, in any case, to cease the supply of weaponry and other strategic resources;

15. Again calls on businesses which invest in Burma to ensure that, in carrying out their projects, human rights are genuinely respected and, if human rights abuses do occur, to suspend their activities in Burma; expresses disappointment that some countries have seen fit to increase substantially their investments in Burma, regardless of the dire human rights situation there;

16. Welcomes the renewal of EU targeted sanctions, recognises that they have failed to achieve the desired impact on those directly responsible for the suffering of the Burmese people, and therefore calls on the Council to analyse the weaknesses in the present sanctions system, and to introduce such measures as may be necessary in order to guarantee a greater degree of effectiveness;

17. In this context, insists that all member states rigorously apply the restrictive measures already agreed;

18. Calls on the Member States Foreign Ministers to discuss measures for strengthening the EU Common Position on Burma at the next GAERC on 7/8 September,

19. Urges the governments of the UK, France, Belgium, Italy, and Slovakia, that are all members of the Security Council, to make a concerted effort to introduce, and obtain unanimous backing for, a binding resolution in regard to Burma, including the release of Aung San Suu Kyi;

20. Urges the governments of all EU Member States that are members of the United Nations Human Rights Council to make a concerted effort to introduce and obtain support for a resolution on Burma at the next session of the Council in September;

21. Calls on Ibrahim Gambari, appointed as Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General on Burma in May, to visit Rangoon, and other parts of Burma, as a matter of urgency, ensuring that he has the opportunity to meet Aung San Suu Kyi, and other leading members of the Opposition, as well as regime figures;

22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States, the governments of the ASEAN nations, the National League for Democracy, the State Peace and Development Council, the Government of the People's Republic of China, the Government of India, the Government of Russia, the Government of the United States of America, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Secretary General of the United Nations.